

LETTERS

AND

QUERIES

ADDRESSED

To the ANONYMOUS ANSWERER of an

APPEAL to the serious and candid

Professors of Christianity;

I believe Mr. Hey the surgeon

To the Rev. Mr. THO. MORGAN, of Morley

Father of the Rev. T. M. of St. John's Library

AND

To Mr. CORNELIUS CALEY.

In meekness instructing those who oppose themselves.

2 Tim. ii. 25.

LEADS

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An A P P E A L

T O

The serious and candid Professors of
Christianity,

On the following SUBJECTS, viz.

1. The Use of Reason in Matters of Religion,
2. The Power of Man to do the Will of God,
3. Original Sin,
4. Election and Reprobation,
5. The Divinity of Christ, and
6. Atonement for Sin by the Death of Christ.



The Triumph of Truth ;

BEING AN ACCOUNT OF THE

Trial of Mr. E. ELWALL,

F O R

HERESY and BLASPHEMY,

At STAFFORD ASSIZES,

Before JUDGE DENTON.

To which are added,

Extracts from some other Pieces of Mr.
ELWALL's, concerning the UNITY
of God.

A N D

A few ADDITIONAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE PREFACE.

HAVING endeavoured, in two small pamphlets, one of which is intitled, *An Appeal to the serious and candid professors of Christianity, &c.* and the other, *The Triumph of Truth*, to communicate instruction, on subjects of considerable importance in religion, to such people in this neighbourhood as have neither much money to spare for the purchase of books, nor time for the reading of them; I shall, in the same mode of publication, put a few *queries* to those persons who have endeavoured to defeat my design.

I am not so little acquainted with human nature, as to expect any great success in this attempt to overturn long established errors; and least of all can I hope to convince those who refuse to read, or to hear, on whom even miracles could produce no effect; but the restoration of christianity to its primitive purity and efficacy, after so long and so radical a corruption (which was foreseen and lamented by the inspired writers of the New Testament) is so great and so worthy an object, that every man who has the interest of religion at heart, will rejoice in every opportunity that divine providence affords him for promoting it, with respect to ever so few, or even a single individual of his fellow-creatures.

A zeal for the truth, and even to contend earnestly for it, does, certainly well become a christian. Since however, the inspiring of a *christian spirit*, is the great purpose to which purity of *christian faith* is subservient he will be particularly careful not to lose the end, while he is contending for the means. *With meekness he will instruct those who oppose themselves*; and that zeal which arises from the love of truth, and of mankind, will easily be distinguished from that spirit which actuates those whom St. Paul calls the *disputers of this world* a spirit which favours strongly of *pride, hatred, and malice*, and which often induces them to have recourse to unfair and unworthy artifices in order to gain a victory

To those who think the writers against the *Appeal* altogether unworthy of notice, and that their productions are such as cannot fail to defeat their own ends, I would observe that, with respect to all who will give proper attention to the subject, I believe that to be the case; but they should consider that minds which have been long under the influence of any prejudice do not readily apprehend the full force of arguments that are levelled against it, and that they are apt to be staggered even with trifling cavils and objections; and as the *Appeal* was written for the use of such persons, the writer of it thinks it his duty not to leave them to struggle unassisted, with the difficulties which have been thrown in their way. He will think no trouble too much, and no channel of communication too mean for him, provided he can have any reasonable prospect of enlightening the minds of his fellow creatures. The *gospel-sower* must cast his seed promiscuously, on all kinds of ground, in hopes that, in some, it may yield a good increase, though he must lay his account with its being lost, and even worse than lost upon others.

Of those who have endeavoured to frustrate the design of the *Appeal*, I shall chiefly distinguish the *anonymous answerer*, because he writes with the most confidence, and assumes most of the air of a champion for the cause. Besides his production is the most laboured, and is somewhat superior in point of composition to the other two. I shall, however, point out those queries in which Mr. Caley, or Mr. Morgan are equally interested, and shall subjoin a few separate and plain questions to those two Gentlemen in particular; though Mr. Caley's moderation, and truly catholic spirit makes me wish to have as little difference with him as possible. But from so ingenuous a temper, I expect to find an openness to conviction, and every thing else that is amiable and good.

In these *queries* I avoid as much as possible, a minute discussion of the meaning of particular texts, because I reserve that for a separate publication, which will contain, *A new translation, or familiar illustration of all the texts that have been much controverted on these subjects.*

To the Author of the anonymous Answer to
the *Appeal to the serious and candid Pro-
fessors of Christianity, &c.*

SIR,

AS you have declared that you thought it your duty to take notice of the *Appeal*, and that it would even be *wrong in you to sit in silence* upon the occasion, I take it for granted you will think it to be as much your duty to vindicate what you have advanced against it; and therefore I take the liberty to request your attention to some observations that have occurred to me in reading your performance. In order to be as concise as possible, and to bring the controversy between us to a short issue, I shall reduce every thing that I would wish to say to you, and to the public, upon these subjects, into the form of *queries*, and I shall keep clear of every thing that has not an immediate relation to the questions in debate.

As to the *abuse* which you have so plentifully heaped upon me, the *hypocrisy*, p. 7, the *subtily*, p. 8, the *jesuitry*, p. 36, the *low, pitiful cunning*, ib. the *artifice and fraud*, ib. the *falsehood and impiety*, p. 18, the *infidelity*, p. 23, and the *blasphemy*, ib. and p. 25. &c. &c. with which you charge me; together with your saying that *I scatter ambiguous words among the people, to puzzle and disturb their minds* p. 11; that *I boldly and manifestly pervert the scriptures*, p. 21; that *I am an advocate for infidelity*, p. 23; that *I, in an open manner, blaspheme the Son of God*, p. 27, and your intimating, p. 25. that *I even hardly know when I have blasphemed him enough*, I shall only answer, that, though I shall never *con- use, or persecution* of any kind; yet when it falls to my share, in consequence of my earnestly contending for what I take to be the great truths of the gospel, I shall value it more than all the riches of the world; considering myself as *reproached for the sake of Christ*; and comforting myself with his declaration,

who says, Mat. vii. 11. *Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven.* Our Lord himself met with similar treatment; and as he forewarned all his disciples, that they should meet with the same, I shall consider this situation as an additional mark of my relation to him, and of my interest in the precious promises of his gospel. You may imagine that, in the part you are acting, *you do God good service*; but you should have remembered, that *the wrath of Man worketh not the righteousness of God.*

In return for the rash censures and opprobrious language above recited, I sincerely pray that the *God of truth* would lead you into those important truths, of which, at present, you seem to be grossly ignorant; and give you a greater share of the spirit of *meekness, humility, and candour*, than you have yet imbibed from the religion you profess; though these are the virtues which, when rightly understood, it seems particularly calculated to inspire. As to your injurious representation of the nature of God, in dividing his being, giving his peculiar glory to another, and robbing him of the most amiable of all his attributes, I hope you will be forgiven, since *you know not what you do.*

The christian people of this neighbourhood, whose attention has been excited to this controversy, will expect a distinct and explicit answer to *all* the following queries; and I beg that, for the sake of decency, the honour of our common religion, and even the reputation of your own cause, you would endeavour to write with more temper, and with less anger and acrimony; and let us both show the world, that it is possible for *christian controversy* to be written with a *christian spirit.*
I am, Sir, Your friend and servant,

QUERIES

Q U E R I E S

Proposed to the anonymous author of an answer to the Appeal, &c.

I. Concerning *Original Sin*, and *the power of man to do the will of God.*

1. **Y**OU say, p. 4, that, *in some respects, it depends upon men themselves, whether they will repent or not.* Please to say clearly and fully in *what respects.* This is a business of too much consequence to be passed over in a superficial manner. I maintain that to repent, or to do any thing else that God absolutely *requires* of us, and for which he *blames* us if we neglect to do it, must depend *intirely* upon ourselves, if there be any truth in the divine declarations, or equity in his moral government.

2. What is your idea of *nature*? for, from the manner in which you speak of it, one would imagine that you did not conceive of it as of any thing that is the gift of God, or subject to his controul, but rather as *some evil and malignant principle*, independent of God, and thwarting his designs. For you say, p. 6, that *the supposition of a power in man to do the will of God is verily a foundation for pride, if man have such a power by nature, as it makes him attribute to his own native power that which is due only to that power which Christ has purchased for, and bestows upon us. It robs him of the glory of our salvation, and sets up man's ability in opposition to the redeemer's grace.* One would almost imagine, from this paragraph, that you considered man as a being self-existent, and independent of God; or at least, that we derive our existence and powers from some other being than he that made our forefather Adam. But since God made *us* as well as Adam, and our nature, as his workmanship, can be no other than what he is pleased to make it, whatever advantages we derive from nature we derive from the God of nature, and whatever imperfections, either of body or mind, we derive from nature, they are such as God, for wise reasons, has thought proper to subject us to.

3. You

3. You say, p. 13, that *all have sinned, all are ungodly by nature, all have in them that carnal mind which is enmity against God.* But is a mere liableness to commit sin, or even a proneness to comply with temptation sufficient to render us *polluted, impure, ungodly, and guilty* before God? If so, Adam himself, as he came out of the hands of his creator, was in this condition. He was not naturally exempt from this *carnal mind*, as appeared by the subsequent event, yet he was not a *sinner* till he had actually sinned. No more are we. That doctrine which supposes that even young children and infants are possessed of a *sinful nature*, so as to be considered by God as actually *sinners, ungodly, and liable to punishment*, is certainly dreadful and absurd. The mind, without attending to any arguments by which it is pretended to be proved, starts back from such a conclusion with horror, and feels that it is something which cannot be admitted, what no reason can prove, and what even a miracle could not make credible.

If we consider the end of our present state of being, we shall not look upon our *nature* in so hateful a light as it is sometimes represented in. It is true that the author of our being has subjected us to various imperfections and infirmities both of soul and body, but it is for our *exercise and trial*. The moral infirmities of our constitution are the proper objects of our watchfulness and correction. If, through negligence, our infirmities betray us into *sin*, that is the proper object of *repentance*. If, through repeated acts of sin, our infirmities are increased and cherished, that also is a proper subject of *repentance and lamentation*; but the mere *infirmities* of that constitution which our maker has given us are not the proper objects of *lamentation*, and much less of *repentance*; because it would be lamenting that we are placed in a state of *trial*, and have such natures given us as a state of trial absolutely requires. It would even be impeaching the wisdom and goodness of our maker, as much as if we were to fret and repine at the *bodily infirmities* to which he has thought proper to subject us, instead of employing our care to obviate, or remedy their bad effects.

If the moral depravity of human nature was the consequence of the sin of Adam, why was it not particularly mentioned in the original history of the Fall of man, in the book of Genesis? All that Moses mentions are things of much less consequence, viz. merely *natural evils*, Gen. iii. 16.—19, the pains of *child bearing*, the *curse upon the ground*, and *natural death*. Afterwards, indeed, *Moses* mentions the *corruption of mankind*, but as a thing that was caused by themselves, and not by their ancestor, Gen. vi. 12. *And God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.*

Besides, in all the expostulations that God makes with a sinful world, from the time of the fall to the present, they are evidently considered as being as *much to blame* as Adam was in his transgression; and if so, it must have been *as much in their power* not to have offended as it was in his. We may safely conclude, therefore, that, in a moral respect, we are created as perfect as he was, but that, like him, *we corrupt ourselves*. If men were born into the world with an *invincible propensity* to sin, a righteous God would certainly make some allowance for us on that account; but where do you find any hint of this in the scriptures?

4. You say, p. 5, that *God gives to all that will accept it a power to yield obedience to his commands, and deny that we have any such power naturally; for that whatever power man has to do the will of God he has it by grace, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ, and not by nature, thro' Adam.* If this be true, I ask, how can the heathen world be *without excuse*, as St. Paul says expressly that they were, Rom. i. 20? He also says ii. 14. that *they are a law unto themselves*, and supposes that they shall be *judged by that law*, without any regard to revelation. But can they be *without excuse* who have a *law* given to them, and not a *power* to comply with it? You will hardly say that they can be said to *accept* of that power thro' Christ, who never heard of him, and to whom the offer of this power was never made.

5. What is the material difference, with respect to

pride, between our having a power to do the will of God by *nature*, or by *grace*, through Jesus Christ, p. 5; if *nature* is as much the gift of God as *grace*? If all that you contend for be the *time* and *manner* in which *free gift* is communicated, what can justify the acrimony with which you write upon the subject. If we both allow that all mankind, without distinction, are possessed of it; or provided *all may have it who will accept of it*, as you express yourself, and the tender be properly made to them, I do not see any difference between us, upon this subject, worth disputing about. I should think, at least, that so very small a difference might be discussed by any man, who is not of a very irascible disposition indeed, with perfect calmness.

6. You seem to take it for granted, p. 7, that it is in the power of sinners to *come to Christ*. I ask, what disposition of mind is necessary in order to their coming to Christ, in your own sense of the phrase? It certainly implies *faith*, a dissatisfaction with a man's former sinful state, or *repentance*, and a willingness to be instructed and directed by Christ, which is the principle of *obedience*. Are these things in a man's power? And if a man do come thus disposed, doth he come as he was *before* he thought of coming to Christ? What then is the precise meaning of exhorting abandoned sinners to come to Christ *as they are*? Explain also what a man wants of being a good christian after you say that he has come to Christ.

7. When you say that sinners must come to Christ *as they are*, that he may give them *repentance*, p. 7, do you suppose that men have *naturally* a power of coming to Christ; and that the necessary consequence of their coming to him, is their everlasting salvation? If so, is not this as much foundation for *pride* as any thing that I have ascribed to man? At most, it is only removing the ground of it a single step farther, and the ultimate consequence of both our schemes is the same, viz. that it is in the power of every man to secure his own salvation.

8. You say, p. 12, that it had most certainly been just
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in God to have made us all suffer the most exquisite and endless torments in hell, on account of the sin of Adam only, even though we had never sinned in our own persons. Upon this I only ask that whether, if it could have been in your choice, you would have chosen to live under the government of a God, one of whose attributes was such justice as this?

9. You admit, p. 16, that we cannot repent of the particular sin of Adam, and yet you say we may repent of the effects of it, which effects you, no doubt, suppose to be necessary. I therefore ask, in what sense you use the word *repentance*, when you apply it to a thing that is *not voluntary*, to which the subjects of it were not in the least *accessary*, and to which they never gave their consent. Please, also, to explain, a little more particularly, how there can be *sin* where there is no *guilt*, as you assert, p. 15.

10. Where is your authority for asserting, p. 14, that *Christ has redeemed all mankind from the guilt of original sin*, as distinct from their *actual transgressions*? This appears to me to be quite a new, and curious doctrine.

II. QUERIES

Relating to THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

1. **Y**OU say, p. 18, that *because the proper title of Christ is the son of God, he is, consequently, very and eternal God*. But are not all christians styled the *sons of God*? Now are we the *sons of God*, 1. John, iii. 2. We are also called not only the *children*, but also the *heirs of God*, and *joint heirs with Christ*. Rom. viii. 17. Adam is more especially called the *son of God*, Luke iii. 18, and Ephraim is called his *dear son*. Jer. xxxi. 20. Will you assert that all these persons, being called *sons of God*, are consequently, each of them, *very and eternal God*? If not, what becomes of this argument of yours to prove the proper divinity of Christ?

2. You say, p. 19, that *if Christ was superior to angels, he was certainly more than mere man, and that the scripture speaks of no order of beings between God and angels*.

gels. Pray, Sir, is it not possible for God to exalt a mere man, so as to make him *superior* to angels. In a common way, we are said to be only *a little lower than they are*. Ps. viii. 5.

3. You say, p. 20, that *Christ could not, strictly speaking, be the image of the invisible God, unless he were God*. Will you say that the image of a man must be areal man, and that, in all cases, the image and the thing whose image it is are the same? To me it appears that the very contrary conclusion directly follows from your premises; and that it would be manifestly absurd to say that God is the image of himself. Have you not read that God made man *in his own image and after his likeness*? Gen. i. 26, 27. And is not the gospel designed to make all christians *partakers of a divine nature*. 1. Pet. ii. 4. Also, if *all the fulness of the godhead dwell in Christ*, Col. ii. 9, the apostle prays that his fellow disciples may be *filled with all the fulness of God*, Eph. iii. 19, and surely it is the best to interpret one passage of scripture by another.

4. If, as you acknowledge, p. 25, the term GOD bet applied, *in an inferior sense*, to angels, magistrates, idols, and even *the devil*, where can be the great improbability, that it may sometimes be applied, in that sense, to Christ; and what then becomes of the admirable dilemma to which, you imagine you have reduced me, viz. that he must either be the *supreme God*, or *the devil*?

5. You endeavour to prove, p. 19, that Christ must be God, because *worship* is said to have been paid to him. But I ask whether you suppose that Cornelius considered Peter as God, and the proper object of *supreme worship*, when he *fell down at his feet and worshipped him*, Acts xxv, though he shewed him more respect than Peter approved of? Did the servant, in our saviour's parable, consider his master in that light, when he *fell down and worshipped him, saying, have patience with me and I will pay thee all*? Did Abraham intend supreme worship to the angels, when he entertained them, and took them to be men, Gen. xviii. 2, or to the sons of Heth, when he was making a bargain for

for a piece of ground to bury his dead, Gen. xxiii. 7; in all which cases the very same word is made use of, as in those which you appeal to. As you quote Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, I presume that you understand those languages, and therefore I say you cannot but know that the word, of which you have endeavoured to avail yourself so much, is frequently used to signify nothing more than *con: on homage and respect*, especially in the Seventy, the stile of which is the nearest to that of the Greek Testament, and, on many accounts, the best authority for interpreting it.

6. You say, p. 25, that you *maintain that Christ is very God upon the experience of every real christian*. I ask how can the truth of any proposition of this kind be ascertained by experience, or what do you mean by *experience* in this case?

7. When I said that *Christ was far from thinking of such an impious robbery as that of being equal to God*, you pronounce it, p. 20, to be a *most false and impious assertion*, and say that *such a bold and manifest per-version of scripture is enough to make every one of my readers to be ever on their guard against every thing I write, when they see me daring enough to alter the scriptures in order to make them speak agreeably to my mind*. In answer to this arrogance I now challenge you, upon your knowledge of the Greek language, whether, notwithstanding your violent exclamation, and virulent abuse, it be possible to render, Phil. ii. 6, more exactly than thus, *He did not think the being equal to God a thing to be seized by robbery*; which is equivalent to my rendering it, by an easier expression, *He did not think of the robbery of being equal to God*. I, in my turn, will venture to pronounce, that you have no knowledge of Greek, if you will pretend to controvert this interpretation. I do not imitate you in quoting the *greek words*, because the people for whose use the *Appeal*, and this defence of it, are calculated, are not capable of reading them. With them this business must rest on your authority or mine. I do not say that the original Greek will not admit of our common translation; but I maintain that that construction is contrary to the meaning of the writer, in that and

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other

other places, and even very unnatural in this place, For the word *but*, which begins the next verse, should imply some *contrast* between what goes before and after, which is beautiful and striking in my sense of the passage. *He did not attempt to be equal to God, BUT humbled himself.* Whereas this opposition is quite lost in your sense of the passage, as any common reader may judge. According to you it is thus; *He made himself equal to God, BUT humbled himself*, where the word *but* has no proper meaning at all.

Besides it ought not to be unknown to you, that the christian Fathers of the three first centuries quote the passage in my sense of it, viz. *Origen, Novatian, Clemens Romanus, Justin Martyr, Lactantius*, and others, as is clearly proved by Dr. Clark, who, you will, perhaps condescend to allow, understood Greek as well as yourself. This text, therefore, instead of proving the *divinity of Christ*, proves the very contrary doctrine.

8. In answer to my observation, that *men cannot conceive that three distinct persons should, each of them, be God, and yet that there should be no more Gods than one*, you say p. 34, *no more can they conceive how the mortal body, the rational soul, and the immortal spirit, can constitute one human nature.* Upon this, I ask, whether you think that either the mortal body, the rational soul, or the immortal spirit, is justly intitled to the name of *man*? It appears to me that there would be a manifest impropriety in calling any of them by that name; since not any one of them, but only the *three together* make the man. Indeed you avow this conclusion, with respect to the three persons in the godhead, and even express your surprize that I should suppose that the contrary was ever meant; for you say, p. 26, (if I can read English words, though I can but barely believe my own eyes with respect to so strange an assertion) *Pray whom did you ever hear affirm, that those three persons, separately, each of them, are possessed of all divine perfections. What we affirm is, that those three persons are one whole, and undivided trinity.* And again; *we believe there is but one God, but we believe that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are that one Jehovah.* But this is clearly contrary

to the doctrine of the Athanasian creed, which says, *that we are compelled by the christian verity to acknowledge every person, by himself to be God.* This, therefore, I conclude to be the genuine faith of all the true members of the churches of Rome and England, which receive that horrid creed. Nay, you yourself, though very inconsistently, say something like it, when you assert, p. 26, *that to each of them, by name, in the scriptures, are ascribed the attributes of the one eternal God.*

9. If, as you acknowledge, none of the persons in the trinity are, separately taken, possessed of all divine perfections, how can any of them be God? Can a God want any divine perfections? Upon your scheme, they are only the *three persons, taken together*, that constitute God, as the three parts of a man constitute a man. If you had avowed that each of the three persons, separately considered, was possessed of all divine perfections, you were aware, I presume, of the necessary consequence, viz. that they would then be each of them, in all respects, *the very same beings*, since absolute perfection admits of no variety; and therefore, there being no difference between any two of them, they could be *one* in no other sense, than the same in which they were *three*.

10. You say, p. 26, *that the three persons in the godhead are not three one, and one three in the same sense, but three in one sense and one in another.* Please, therefore, to inform us in what sense they are *three*, and in what sense they are *one*; or, since they are only possessed of all divine perfections *jointly*, give us to understand which of them belong to one and, which to another.

11. As you maintain that there is no one person who is, *separately*, possessed of all divine perfections, but that *three persons* are *jointly* possessed of them, wherein does your system differ, materially, from that of Spinoza, who also said that, *no one being* is God, but that the *whole universe* is so? You differ only in the number of persons, or things, which you suppose to constitute divinity; but, if I can affix any ideas to words, you both of you maintain, either a *multiplicity of Gods*, or *no God at all*.

Upon this most important subject I expect your answer to be very full and explicit; for to me it is a very awful thing to suppose that *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, that great being whom he calls *the only true God*, John xvii. 3, and whom he affirms to be *perfect*, Matt. v. 48, is not possessed of all divine perfections, being only *one of three*, who are jointly possessed of them.

12. As to your quotations from Philo, and the Cabalists, I shall only ask you, whether you are willing to maintain their orthodoxy, with respect to the trinity, against the learned Basnage, who studied the history and opinions of the Jews, perhaps, more than any other man; who has written very largely upon the subject; and yet, though a trinitarian himself, has fully exploded all the pretences of Cudworth, and others, to find the doctrine of the trinity either among the ancient or modern Jews. This doctrine he calls *the gulph which intirely separates the Jews from the christians*. A Jew, he says, *considers three persons as three Gods, and this tritheism shocks him*. (*Lui fait horreur*) Hist. de Juifs Tom. 3. p. 10. He also informs us that, *the Jews consider themselves as bearing their testimony to the unity of God among all the nations of the world*, Ib. Tom. 5. p. 2135. Deny these facts if you can. What *ought*, or *ought not* to offend a Jew is not the question. The doctrine of the trinity doth *in fact*, and, from the time that it was started, *always did* offend the whole body of the Jews, and may truly be said to be one of the greatest obstacles to their conversion.

I shall, moreover, take it as a favour, if you will inform me from whom you quoted your *Hebrew sentence*, relating to this subject, that I may have an opportunity of examining your authority more particularly. I once had a tolerable knowledge of that difficult language, the Rabinical Hebrew, and I am possessed of the writings of some of the more celebrated Jewish Doctors; but they seem to be a very different kind of writers from the author of that curious sentence. If you quoted it at second hand (for which I shall not blame you)

be so ingenuous as to direct me to the christian writer from whom you really had it.

III. Miscellaneous Queries.

1. **A**S you admit with me that *true religion consists in a change of heart, affections, and habits*, p. 9, can you say that this change can be effected in a moment, except it be out of the course of nature, and by the *miraculous* interposition of God. It is certainly of the nature of *habits*, at least, to be changed by degrees. But if by *instantaneous justification*, you only mean that there is some moment, at which, in the gradual, or speedy change of a man's temper and conduct, good resolutions and dispositions *begin* to prevail over bad ones, and at which he, consequently, begins to be approved of God, I agree with you.

2. I take it for granted, from what you say on the subject, p. 17, and 36, that you are no believer in the doctrines of *absolute election and reprobation*. But I ask you whether there be not *particular texts of scripture* as strongly in favour of those doctrines, as of any other that are controverted in the *Appeal*. Indeed *single texts*, quoted without regard to their proper connection, and meaning, may be produced in favour of any sentiments; and there are some which are no less explicit in favour of the doctrine of *transubstantiation* than any that you avail yourself of in the defence of *original sin*, or the *divinity of Christ*.

3. With respect to the doctrine of *election*, you say, p. 17, that *whoever, on either side of the question, are men fearing God, and working righteousness, notwithstanding their difference of opinion in THIS point, I make no doubt but both are accepted of him*. Pray, Sir, why may not persons who *fear God and work righteousness* be accepted of him, though they differ in *other points* also, for instance with respect to the doctrine of the trinity, and satisfaction for sin by the death of Christ? There are persons who are as decisive in their condemnation of you, for your disbelief of the seventeenth article of the thirty-nine, as you can be in your censures upon

me, for avowing my disbelief of any other of them, and with equal justice. With such persons *Arminianism* and *Socinianism* are not considered, as they are by you, p. 36, as *different as light and darkness*. This mutual excommunication, and exclusion from heaven, has been the disgrace of christianity. Let us, for God's sake, *forbear one another in love, till we all come before the judgment seat of Christ*.

4. In answer to my question, whether any satisfaction at all besides repentance and reformation, on the part of a sinner be required by God. You say, p. 28, with an affectation of extreme surprize, *Repentance and reformation? Is that satisfaction to the law of God? Is it possible that repentance and reformation could be an equivalent to their threatened death?* In return, I ask you where does God require an equivalent, or, if he have received an equivalent, in what does his free mercy and *forgiveness* consist?

5. You say, p. 29, that *Christ did not bear the infinite weight of divine wrath, but only such a degree of wrath as was equivalent to that infinite wrath, that was due to the sins of mankind*. Pray, Sir, what can be an equivalent to infinite, but infinite? In this respect you appear not to have perfectly learned your own system, or to be consistent with yourself.

6. You ask me, p. 35, if *I will coolly affirm that, till a thing be explained, it can no more be believed than a proposition in an unknown tongue*. I do very coolly re-affirm it; and to exemplify my meaning, I desire you would pronounce the Latin, Greek, or Hebrew in your pamphlet to any of your unlearned neighbours, and, without giving him the English, ask him whether they express a truth. He can only reply, that he has no ideas to your terms. In like manner, though I believe many things on the authority of revelation, which could never have been discovered by human reason; yet still I can believe no farther concerning them than the inspired writers explain them, by giving me ideas of them. If they speak to me in an unknown tongue, I may have no doubt but that they speak the truth; but it is not revealed to me, so long as it is not explained, to the level

level of my capacity. Thus, I believe the *fact* of the resurrection, which is a doctrine of revealed religion; but I could not be said to *believe it*, if I did not know that the resurrection means the recovery of life after a state of death; but as to the *manner* in which it will be accomplished, *I believe nothing*, because *I know nothing* about it; the sacred writers not having *explained*, that is, not having *revealed*, or *made it known* to me.

7. As several additional observations on the subject of the divinity of Christ, and atonement for sin by the death of Christ were subjoined to the *Triumph of Truth*; in which several of the objections mentioned in your pamphlet were fully obviated, particularly that very trite and insignificant one, concerning the *manhood* of Christ being only intended, whenever he is said to be inferior to the Father; why did you not take notice of them? I now call upon you to answer those observations.

I shall conclude these queries with advising you, and if you have a sensible friend, he will join with me in the advise, that you would write with more decency and modesty the next time you engage in controversy. For my part, I am by no means desirous of any such advantage as your unguarded heat would give me; wishing for nothing but *the prevalence of truth*, which is soonest come at, when arguments on both sides of a question are represented in a *cool* and *dispassionate* manner.

I particularly beg that you would no more offend me, and other lovers of the scriptures, by the manner in which you, and too many persons of your stamp, express your abhorrence and detestation of them; on the supposition of what I firmly believe is the truth, viz. that they do not contain your sentiments. Mr. Venn without more ado, was for *burning his bible* when his opinions were confuted; and you hesitate not, in the same case, to give that sacred volume a *character*, which, I dare say, you would think, made it *deserving* of that fate, when you say, p. 30, that it would be *almost one great lie*. This kind of language, respecting the scriptures, I think betrays a want of decency.

Wishing that both you and I may study these *oracles of divine*

divine truth more, and to better purpose ; that we may thereby be *led into all truth*, and, what is of the greatest consequence, that the purity of christian doctrine may have a happy influence on our tempers and conduct I, am, Sir, your servant, and that of all the world, in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

To the Rev. Mr. MORGAN.

S I R,

AS you have thought proper to interfere in the controversy occasioned by the *Appeal*, you might be displeased if I took no notice of your performance. You say, indeed (blaming me for my intention to address queries to you as well as the other answerers of the *Appeal*) that you did *not refer to any of my writings* ; but the *common name* is some mark of relationship ; and the *subject* of the work, with the *time* and *manner* of the publication give me the clearest right to rank your performance among those that were intended to defeat the purpose of mine ; and therefore it had such a *reference* to it, as makes it as properly entitled to a reply as a *direct answer*.

You say, also, that your address was to *your own people* ; but the sale was not *confined* to your own people ; and in what you call an *Apology*, prefixed to your work, you have this very remarkable expression, *Be it known to the world* ; so that, in fact, your address was to all the persons into whose hands my own *Appeal* could come.

I cannot say that I have much to animadvert upon in *your Appeal*, except that want of explicitness and precision, which leaves little room for particular animadversion. What I have most to complain of are some things that look like *unfairness* in your performance, and availing yourself of such representations as are unworthy of the cause which, I believe, we both mean to

sup-

support. These I shall freely mention, in order to give you an opportunity to exculpate yourself; and I sincerely wish it may be in your power to do it.

1. Why should you brand the writer of the Appeal with the name of *infidel*, by defining that term, p. 4, so as to make it applicable to *those who reject the gospel* (that is, what you take to be the gospel) *either in whole or in part*, if it was not to avail yourself of the odium which is inseparable from that epithet. Also in the title of your book you say, *it is intended as a preservation against the principles and practices of the INFIDELS of the present age*; tho' there is not one opinion that you combat in it, which is not maintained by myself, by other christian writers, and by some of the most eminent defenders of christianity, particularly the great and excellent Dr. Lardner; who notwithstanding his whole life devoted to the service of the gospel, is by you ranked in the class of *Infidels*.

This extreme of *infidelity*, as well as the other, which you term *enthusiasm*, you also call a *fatal* one; and say that *the way between these is the only one that leadeth unto life, tho' few find it*; for that *the many miss their road, both as to matters of faith and practice; sins and errors being a bottomless pit where thousands perish*. This severity of censure agrees with your saying that *some of the differences among dissenting ministers relate to things of the last importance in religion*. What you really meant by this language I will not pretend to say, but I cannot help thinking that our readers will imagine that, in your opinion, my Appeal is the production not of a *christian*, but of an *infidel*, who is going himself, and leading others to everlasting destruction.

2. It has very much the appearance of an *unfair* and *unworthy* artifice in you to quote all your objections to the doctrine of atonement, p. 19, from the works of *deists*, when some of them are to be found in the *Appeal*, and other serious christian writings. You could not take a more effectual method to insinuate, that none but *deists* make such objections to that doctrine; and therefore that I, and others, who do make them, deserve no better name.

3. It looks like an artifice of the same kind, viz. availing yourself of the odium conveyed by words and phrases, that you represent the doctrine of the trinity as opposed by such persons only as St. Paul calls *the disputers of this world*, p. 9, and by *the prophane babbling of weak and wicked men who oppose the truth*, p. 11; as if it were impossible that any serious and candid person could believe otherwise than you do on that subject. You also speak of my sentiments in general, opposed to yours in general, as having no support but *the powers of wit and corrupt reason*. For you say that *the doctrines which I have encountered are established upon a rock, and all the powers of wit and corrupt reason cannot prevail against them*.

4. Your reminding me that the sentiments I have avowed are *contrary to those of the established church* looks like artifice to gain to your side the friends of the establishment; and this conduct is truly very curious in a dissenter. But your reminding me, at the same time, that my sentiments are also contrary to those of the *legal dissenters* seems to imply a *threatning*, which, I am not afraid to say I most sincerely despise. Far from boasting that my sentiments have the sanction of the *powers of this world*, I should rather glory in a religion which had no countenance but in *the kingdom of God and of Christ*.

You do not fail, indeed, to intimate that your cause, besides being supported by the powers of this world, is *established upon the rock of the everlasting gospel*, so that *all the powers of wit and corrupt reason cannot prevail against it*. To this I would observe, that the whole system of popery is likewise built upon the same everlasting rock; for without that, as a foundation for it, it could have had no existence. But, notwithstanding this, both that system and yours may be, and I believe are, such *wood, hay, and stubble as have been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets*, and which will be utterly consumed; while the foundation itself, and whatever has been built upon it, of better and more suitable materials, will stand till time shall be no more.

 QUERIES proposed

To the Rev. Mr. MORGAN.

Rev. SIR,

THE questions I shall now propose to you are such as you and your readers ought to thank me for, being designed to give you an opportunity of delivering your sentiments on subjects which you represent as *of the last importance in religion*, and yet concerning which it is not easy to say what your sentiments really are. In these questions I am far from intending to act the part of an *inquisitor*, or to indulge an *impertinent curiosity*; since I only ask an explanation of what you have publicly advanced. In return, I shall think myself obliged to you for pointing out to me any thing that seems to be *obscure or ambiguous* in my *Appeal*, and shall very frankly both tell you what I really meant, and give you my reasons for it.

1. As you have thought proper to bestow the epithet of *infidels* upon those of your fellow christians who do not believe quite so much as yourself; since also I find myself represented by you, notwithstanding *the integrity and sincerity* that you allow me, in what you call a *fatal extreme*, and am not in that *narrow but safe way that leadeth unto life*; since I am one of *the many who have missed their road in matters of faith*, and am plunged in *the bottomless pit of error, where thousands perish*; I beg that, for my satisfaction, and that of others, you would inform us distinctly what errors are fatal, and what are not; and give some plain reason for the distinction. If a Socinian have no chance for salvation, has an Arian any? If an Arian have none, has an Arminian any? If an Arminian have none, has a Baxterian any? &c. &c. &c. It really behoves you, Sir, to be very explicit upon this head. To this question, therefore, I and all your readers shall expect a plain and clear answer.

2. By *enthusiasts* you say, p. 4, that you mean *those who pretend that they are guided by the spirit of God, when they do not use the means of grace, and that say they can understand scripture by inspiration, without other helps.* Upon this I cannot help asking some farther information concerning the sect, or body of men, to whom this description answers. Neither my knowledge of church history, or of the world, has yet brought me acquainted with any such persons; and yet you call this species of enthusiasm one of the dangerous and fatal extremes of the present day. If there be such persons (which I am very much disposed to question) explain to us also the reason why such poor deluded creatures must be consigned to the *bottomless pit*.

3. I observe that you advance nothing upon the subject of the *divinity of Christ*, but what I could say myself, believing God to be intimately united to the man Christ Jesus, and acting by him. For, certainly, the power by which he worked miracles, and knew the hearts of men, was properly *divine*; and this I know to be all that is really meant by many persons who talk as you do. But do you believe that Christ has any divinity that is *not derived from the Father*, but *essentially in himself*?

4. Upon the doctrine of *original sin* your expressions are peculiarly vague and indeterminate. You say, indeed, p. 12, that *all men who are subject to death are, in some sense, accounted sinners before God, even children, who never sinned by actual transgression.* But unless you will say in *what sense* they are sinners, you say nothing at all to the purpose. Is the sin of Adam imputed to them, so that they are justly *punishable* for it here and hereafter? Also, when you say, under the same head, p. 14, that *we are under the curse of the law, and liable to be condemned to everlasting torments in a future state*; do you mean that we are liable to this punishment for our own transgressions only, or for the sin of Adam? What you have said is altogether ambiguous.

5. Upon that most important subject *the power of man*

man to do the will of God, and also on the doctrines of election and reprobation, you are absolutely silent; but as these are necessary parts of the system which I have attacked, and which you partially maintain, it behoved you to have been very explicit on all these heads. I rather imagine that you think with me upon these subjects; both from this emphatical silence, and also from what you say, p. 21, that *the valuable blessings of redemption are held forth, and freely offered to sinners; and that not one of these blessings is to be obtained, but in the way, and upon the terms of faith and repentance.* If there be any meaning in a *free offer*, it certainly implies a *power of acceptance and refusal* in all those to whom it is made. Those who believe that men have *no power* in this case, either to accept or refuse, and who, consequently, admit the doctrines of election and reprobation in their just extent, are, in general, not only forward to avow their belief, but also lay great stress upon it; and, accordingly, the true Calvinist justly regards Arminianism, and even Baxterianism, with as much horror as Socinianism itself. Indeed, there is more reason to be apprehensive of them, as they undermine the old system by degrees, and seldom fail to lead men farther.

I am,

Rev. Sir,

Your very humble servant,

To

To Mr. CORNELIUS CALEY.

S I R,

I Chuse to conclude these papers with an address to you, because I am sure to do it in perfect good humour. You and I differ in some of our sentiments, but we agree in things of much more consequence than *any sentiments*, viz. christian moderation, candour, and benevolence. I only take the liberty to propose to you the following questions, which you will very much misinterpret, if you imagine to be captious ones.

1. Allowing that *sincerity of intention and moderation of spirit are apparent throughout my performance*, you say, p. 3, that *I am mistaken in the very fundamentals of the christian religion*. I therefore desire to know what it is that you mean by *fundamental*, and in what sense a doctrine is so.

2. You say, p. 7, that you agree with me touching many exhortations found in the scriptures, calling sinners to turn and repent; and yet you say, p. 12, that to imagine a man, by any power of his own, can raise himself from a death of trespasses and sins, is just as absurd, as to suppose that he can raise his own deadbody, when the breath is departed from it. If this be literally the case, what can exhortation to sinners mean? You may pray over a dead body, that God would give it life; but you would never think of talking to it, except by way of figure, as when we address the heavens and the earth, &c.

3. As you compare the three persons in the trinity to the three constituent parts of man, p. 15, consider what I have said to the anonymous answerer on that subject, and say whether that hypothesis does not imply, that each of the three persons is only one third part of deity, and whether this be not a strange and dangerous doctrine.

4. As a proof of the divinity of Christ you alledge, p. 16, our Saviour's saying to Philip, *He that has seen me has seen the Father*. But if this be at all to your purpose, will it not prove too much, viz. that Christ is not the *Son*, or the *second* person in the trinity, but the *Father*, or the *first*?

5. When you say, p. 18, that *the death of Christ is a real sacrifice*, meaning that it is so in the same sense in which *praise* is called a sacrifice, I agree with you; for it appears to me that praise cannot be called a sacrifice any otherwise than by way of comparison, as it is my opinion that Christ, in his death, is represented in the scriptures.

CONCLUSION.

WHEN I look back upon this controversy, and consider that all my antagonists are either declared, or justly suspected *Arminians*, I cannot help expressing my wonder at what is become of the *rigid Predestinarians*: for they are properly those against whom (as any person may perceive) the writer of the *Appeal* has ventured to throw down his gauntlet; or rather against whom (to reverse the comparison of Mr. Morgan) he has advanced, like the stripling David, with a sling and a stone, confiding in the goodness of his cause, and committing himself to the protector of divine providence.

Time was, and I am not so young but that I well remember the time, when such antagonists as I have had would have been reckoned no better than myself, by those who were reputed the *orthodox* of their day; and yet with what rage has one of these *beterodox* writers, attacked a *brother heretic*. How would the mares of those old champions smile to see us *fall out by the way*, when they were confident that we must all come to the same place of torment at last; and the furious zeal of those veterans was far more plausible, and

respectable, than that which it has been my fate to meet with.

There is something *striking* and *consistent* in the genuine *Supralapsarian system*, of the eternally destined fall of man, an infinite penalty incurred by one, and, by the imputation of his sin, affecting all, and an infinite atonement adequate to it, made by an infinite being; by which means a small remnant of the human race are necessarily saved; while all the rest of mankind, including new born children, unbelieving Jews, Mahometans and Heathens, Arminians and Baxterians, Arians and Socinians, without distinction (as destitute either of faith, or the right faith) are consigned to everlasting torments, with the Devil and his angels; from whence results *glory* to a God, who, in all this dreadful scheme, fought nothing else.

These are the *tremendous doctrines* which have overawed mankind for so many centuries; and, compared with this, all the modern *qualified, intermediate systems*, are crude, incoherent, and contemptible things. My antagonists may cavil at *election and reprobation*, or any other single article in the well compacted system; but every part is necessary to the whole; and if one stone be pushed out of its place, the whole building tumbles to the ground. And when, in consequence of their ill-judged attempts to alter, patch, and repair, they have brought things to this catastrophe, there will be nothing left but the simple belief, that the merciful parent of the universe, who never meant any thing but the happiness of his creatures, sent his well beloved son, *the man Christ Jesus*, to reclaim men from their wickedness, and to teach them the way of righteousness; assuring them, for their encouragement, of the free and unbought pardon of their sins, and promising a life of endless happiness to all that receive and obey the gospel, by repenting of their sins, and bringing forth fruits meet for repentance.

This is the essence of what is called *Socinianism*; and though this simple doctrine, may, on account of its excellence and simplicity, be a stumbling block to
some

CONCLUSION.

29

some, and foolishness to others, I believe it to be the sum and substance of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the wisdom and power of God.

Having, in the *Appeal*, undertaken to encounter that enormous system of opinions, which has so long tyrannized over the reason and conscience of the christian world, my opponents may depend upon it that I shall pursue my purpose, and that I shall least of all be dismayed by such a system as theirs; which, at best, is but the mere *shadow* of what I have ventured to attack; for though it may assume the same air, and menacing tone, it is far from being the same thing. It is no more than the ass in the lion's skin.

Formidable as this lion itself, this great adversary of the truth, may be, I make no doubt but that, by the help of reason, and the *sword of the spirit, which is the word of God*, it will be finally overcome. And whenever the *holy apostles and prophets shall rejoice at the fall of this last part of mystical Babylon*, Rev. xviii. 20; happy will they be who may join the chorus, as having employed their efforts, however feeble, with those who, in this great cause, fight under the *banners of the lamb, and who are called, and chosen, and faithful*; Rev. xvii. 14.

A

P R A Y E R,

Respecting the *present State of Christianity*

ALMIGHTY God, the giver of all good, and especially the *Father of lights*, and the fountain of all wisdom and knowledge ; we thank thee that *thou hast put a spirit in man, and that thine inspiration giveth us understanding* ; that, being formed after thine own image, we find ourselves possessed of a nature superior to that of brute creatures ; and being endowed with the noble faculty of reason, are capable of investigating important truths, and of governing our conduct, so as to attain to very distinguished degrees of excellence and happiness.

We thank thee that, in aid of this *light of nature*, thou hast superadded the gift of *revelation*, having, from time to time, communicated to mankind, by thy servants the prophets, the most useful information, concerning thy nature, perfections, and government, concerning our duty here, and our expectations hereafter. And we more especially rejoice that, upon every occasion of thy gracious intercourse with mankind, thou hast represented thyself to us as the proper object of our reverence, love, and confidence ; as a being of boundless goodness, and the greatest compassion to those frailties and infirmities, to which it has seemed good to thy infinite wisdom to subject us ; as one who expectest no more of us than thou hast enabled us to perform ; and who, upon our sincere return to our duty, art ever ready to extend the freest mercy and forgiveness towards us, even after our most aggravated and repeated offences.

We

We thank thee, more especially, for the last and most perfect revelation of thy will to mankind, in the gospel of Jesus Christ, in whom fit has pleased thee, that *all fullness should dwell*; who has established, upon the surest foundations, the great and important doctrines of the proper *unity* and *mercifulness* of thy nature, and thy unrivalled *supremacy* with respect to himself, as well as to all other beings, and all other things; and who has likewise given us the most satisfactory assurance of a resurrection from the dead, confirmed to us by his own death and resurrection; whereby we are encouraged to expect, that, because he lives, we shall live also.

It has seemed good to thy unsearchable wisdom, (which permits the rise and continuance of evil, in order, we doubt not, to bring about the greatest good) that this most excellent religion, so honourable to thee, and so beneficial to mankind, should, by means of the base *artifices* of some, and the general *ignorance*, which lately overspread the world, become grossly corrupted, whereby such opinions have prevailed among the professors of christianity, as greatly dishonour thy nature, imply the most unjust reflections on thy righteous moral government, and are highly injurious to the virtue and happiness of men. How has the gold become dim, how is the most fine gold changed!

The great and important doctrine of thy divine *unity* has been generally abandoned, and objects of supreme worship multiplied. Thy messenger and servant, the meek and humble Jesus, who, upon all occasions, referred his wisdom and mighty works to thee, his God and Father, speaking and acting by him, has been advanced to a proper equality with thyself; and even his mother, the virgin Mary, and innumerable saints and angels, have likewise, been addressed, as if they were omnipresent beings. Having thus divided thy being, robbed thee of thy essential attributes and perfections, and distributed them among a multiplicity of inferior beings, depraved and unworthy notions of thy moral character have consequently prevailed, and many of the evils of *idolatry* have been introduced, among the professors

fessors of that religion, which acknowledges but *one living and true God*, even thee, our father in heaven, and one mediator, the man Christ Jesus.

Having divested thee, in their imaginations, of the most amiable of all thy attributes, even the essential *placability* of thy nature, they have represented thy free mercy to penitent sinners as purchased by the blood of thy innocent son. Forgetting that thou art good to all, and that thy tender mercies are over all thy works, and also that thou, the righteous Lord, lovest righteousness, they have ascribed to thee an arbitrary and unreasonable partiality, in favour of some of the human race, and a most cruel and unjust severity towards others, as condemning them to everlasting torments, for crimes of which they could not be guilty, and expecting of them that which thou hadst not enabled them to do. And, having lost the idea of the *purity* of thy nature and thy regard to moral righteousness, as the only just ground of acceptance and favour with thee, they have had recourse to unmeaning and even base and mischievous superstitions, as compensations for their non-observance of thy holy commandments.

To confirm all these, and innumerable other corruptions of thy holy religion, supreme authority has been openly usurped by men, over that church, in which thou hast given all power to our only Lord and Master Jesus Christ; and those of thy faithful servants who have justly refused to submit to their usurpations, have by them been subjected to the greatest hardships, and even persecuted unto death; so that these temporal antichristian powers are drunk with the blood of thy holy martyrs.

We deeply lament this almost universal departure from the true faith of thy son's gospel, the stop that has by this means, been so long put to the propagation of christianity among Jews, Mahomedans, and Heathens; and the prevalence which it has occasioned of infidelity and profaneness in christian countries.

But we thank thee, who, in thine own due time, wilt, we doubt not, bring light out of all

all darkness, and order out of all confusion, that, in several christian countries, many of these corruptions and abuses have been reformed, and that antichristian tyranny is every where giving place to the power of truth, and the just liberties of mankind, in thinking and acting for themselves in all matters of religion.

For these great and invaluable blessings we are, under thee, indebted to the strenuous labours of thy faithful servants, who have not accounted even their lives dear unto them; but, for the love of thy truth, have renounced all worldly advantages, boldly asserting their christian liberty, and holding themselves accountable to none but thee, the sole and immediate lord of conscience, and to the great shepherd and bishop of souls, acting by commission from thee, Jesus Christ.

We adore the wisdom of thy providence in bringing about the restoration of useful *learning*, and making it subservient to the reformation of thy Church; so that thy servants, having recovered the genuine, but long forgotten sense of the scriptures, were able to discover the false grounds of the reigning superstition, and of the ecclesiastical tyranny of their times. Grant that, by a continued and diligent study of the same word of thy truth, we may, in due time, be led to the full discovery of every remaining corruption of our holy religion, and be brought to receive the whole truth in the love thereof.

Hasten, we intreat thee, the approach of that glorious times when, according to the faithful and true writings of thy servants the prophets, our holy religion shall recover its primitive purity and efficacy; when thy self alone, as the only true God, a being of perfect rectitude, spotless purity, and essential goodness and mercy shalt be the object of supreme worship: when thy creatures of mankind shall have recourse to no method of rendering themselves acceptable to thee, but unfeigned repentance for their transgressions of thy laws, and a sincere endeavour to conform to them for the future, in a course of upright intentions and worthy actions through the whole of their lives; and when no apprehension of arbitrary decrees shall alarm the fears of the humble,

or

or encourage the presumption of the confident,

Dispose all who profess the christian name to study the scriptures of truth with unprejudiced minds; and inspire all those who attain to the truth with a just *zeal* for the propagation of it, as far as thy providence shall give them ability and opportunity to do it. May neither the love of popular applause, of filthy lucre, or any worldly advantage, nor the fear of man, of reproach, or of death, be a snare to them, and hinder them in this work of love; and may they daily rejoice in the testimony of their consciences, and in the happy fruits of their pious and assiduous labours. May the genuine purity of their christian doctrine be recommended by the simplicity of christian manners, so as greatly to favour the propagation of the truth as it is in Jesus. In this purity, may the everlasting gospel be preached to all that dwell on the earth, to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.

May all those powers of this world, which have usurped any authority belonging to our only rightful lord and king in his church, become disposed to relinquish their unjust claims; and may those kings and princes, who will not acknowledge the sovereignty of Jesus in his church, and especially those who obstinately oppose the reformation of it, be utterly confounded, and, by his power, be broken in pieces like a potters vessel. Take to thyself, O Lord God almighty, thy great power, and reign; and may the gospel of Jesus Christ go forth conquering and to conquer. By the brightness of our Lord's appearance, may the man of sin be utterly consumed, that all the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdoms of our lord and of his Christ, and he may reign for ever and ever.

In the mean time, may we thy faithful servants, in the patient waiting for this coming of our lord Jesus Christ, be fearless and unwearied in asserting thy truth, be ready to lay hold of every favourable opportunity to promote it, and, more especially, be careful to recommend it by a suitable life and conversation. May we distinguish ourselves by having the same mind that was also in Christ
Jesus,

Jesus, by genuine humility, meekness, forbearance, brotherly love, heavenly mindedness, and habitual cheerful devotion; that when our lord shall return, and take account of his servants, we may be found without spot and blameless, and not be ashamed before him at his coming; but having our lamps ready, and waiting for the bridegroom, we may enter into his everlasting joy.

Now to thee who alone art eternal, immortal, and invisible the only wise, living, and true God, be glory, through Jesus Christ, for ever and ever, Amen.

ADVERTISEMENT.

ALL that is meant by these *small publications* is to prepare the way for one *larger treatise*, addressed to the understandings of the common people. In order to excite a more general attention to these important subjects, and to throw the materials of which the treatise will consist into more hands, it was thought adviseable to publish them in small and cheap pamphlets. That these ends have been, in a great measure, answered, appears both by the rapid and extensive *sale* of the pamphlets, and the three *answers* which have been already written to the APPEAL. And, though, if I could have had the choice of my antagonists, they should have been persons who had differed from me in more points, and who would have undertaken the defence of the whole system that I have opposed, those that have appeared have, notwithstanding, been of considerable use to me, in collecting the *objections* and *difficulties*

difficulties which have the greatest weight with the common people, and will enable me to address them with more advantage and effect.

The things that are chiefly wanted are

First, to set in a clear and strong light those great principles of *natural religion*, concerning the proper *unity*, the perfect *rectitude*, and the essential *placability* of the divine being, with which *revealed religion* can never be at variance.

Secondly, to shew that the general and plain tenor of the scriptures strongly enforces the same principles, and,

Thirdly, that those particular texts, which seem to have a different aspect, are yet perfectly consistent with them, when justly translated, and judiciously explained.

The two former of these ends, it is presumed, have been already, in a great measure, gained; and, God willing, the last also shall be accomplished very soon. In the mean time I invite my opponents to return to the charge, and I sincerely wish they may do it with greater coolness.

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